



SEPT 2004

TOPSIDE

The NDP Newsletter for NOAA Diving Supervisors and Divers



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NOAA Diving Center

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TRAINING SCHEDULE

Take the time now to review your complement and see if you will need to add divers either now or in the future. It is not too early to start looking ahead to the January and May classes for slots.

Diver candidates must submit the following forms to Laurie Barber by December 17th, 2004 for the January Working Diver Class:

- NDP Training and Authorization Request form
- NOAA NDC Standardized Equipment Measurement form
- **Completed** NOAA Diving Physical package, (there are new forms for NOAA Corps officers and Wage Marine employees DD-2808, 2807-1)

Forms are available at the following web address; www.ndc.noaa.gov/forms.html. Fax or mail completed forms to NDC.

Course schedules through January 2005:

Nov 29 - Dec 10	MPIC	Seattle
Dec 13 - Dec 17	DMT	Seattle
Jan 10 - Jan 28	Working Diver	Key West
Jan 24- Jan 28	Divemaster	Key West



ANNUAL REPORTS

All ships and UDS's, will receive a NOAA Diving Program Annual Report Information form. This form should be used to document ship/unit diving activities during FY2004. It is also available as a fillable PDF form on the NDP web site (www.ndc.noaa.gov/forms.html). Completed reports are due to your unit's LODO/NMAO FDO by October 15, 2004.

NMFS LODO—Frank Parrish, Honolulu, HI

NOS LODO—Bill Valley, Key Largo, FL

OAR LODO—Jules Craynock, Miami, FL

NMAO FDO—Steve Urick, Seattle, WA

LODOs should submit their own summary report along with the individual unit reports by November 01, 2004. UDSs with off-site sub-units should include diving activities of their sub-units in their own report, or designate a diver in each sub-unit to complete and submit a copy of this report.

SEP UPDATE LETTERS

Annual Standardized Equipment Program (SEP) assessment letters will be mailed to each UDS the middle of October. Unit Diving Supervisors are requested to carefully review these letters, comment on any inaccuracies, and mail or fax corrected letters back to NDC by November 01, 2004. All units will be assessed for divers in possession of SEP equipment, or NOAA employees actively diving for the unit during FY2004. Divers will be charged one half or all of the assessment fee depending upon their diving activity and equipment possession during the previous fiscal year.



BLACK CORAL DIVING

Divers from the Ecosystems and Oceanography Division at the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center in Honolulu cooperated with Biologists from the Division of Aquatic Resources for the state of Hawaii to survey the black coral beds off of Lahaina, Maui. Black coral is a precious coral and is considered the "gem of Hawaii."

In August of 2000 and 2001, the Ecosystems and Oceanography Division of PIFSC surveyed the beds by using remote cameras and conducted dives in depths between 120 to 240 feet. Part of the data from these dives was used to generate a preliminary report on the size structure of these black coral beds. However, there was a need for a greater sample size by the state. A cooperative cruise between NMFS and Hawaii State DAR was conducted Sept 8th through Sept 12th of this year. The NOAA vessel OSCAR ELTON SETTE supported divers on site, and conducted remote camera drops to locate and survey the black coral beds.

Dives past 130 feet fall under the "high risk" definition of NDC and chamber support was provided by the NOAA Dive Center, U.S. Army Diving Unit and the U.S. Navy. The chamber on site was the Draeger Duocom chamber, also known as the "red shoe" or "aluminum maiden." There were two dive groups onboard: the "shallow" divers who surveyed the beds between 80 to 130 feet and the "deep" divers who used mixed gas and technical dive gear to survey 130 to 240 feet. Most of the "deep" dives were conducted between 170 to 200 feet.

In the four days of operations, 8 drop camera stations, 8 "shallow" dive surveys and 8 "deep" dive surveys were conducted. The height, species and depth of occurrence of 740 black coral trees were recorded, which is more than double a previous survey's sample that had been conducted from a submersible. Two environmental archival stations were also set up to measure current, temperature and settlement for a year.

Tony Montgomery, a Biologist for Hawaii State DAR considered it to be a very successful cruise. Frank Parrish, Fishery Biologist and Ray Boland, Research Biologist were the NOAA component of the "deep" dives. Many thanks to the officers and crew of the SETTE who were involved in every aspect, from drop camera to dive support. Thanks also to Ensign Eric Johnson of NDC as dive medic, 1SG Rodney Heikkinen, U.S. Army Diving as chamber operator and Capt. Bruce Cohen, U.S.N. as our DMO.

(Photo) Frank Parrish relieves a Deep diver of his NITROX while he decompresses in-water.



MPIC/DMT INFORMATION

MPIC & DMT is a go! The dates are as follows: MPIC will be November 29-December 10 and DMT is December 13-18. NDC will only be accepting 24 applicants for each class.

Currently we have many more applicants than we have slots on the list. An e-mail was recently sent to all on the list, and all NOAA Divers, and Ship CO's & XO's asking that anyone who would like to attend submit a "Training Request & Authorization Form" to the NOAA Dive Center NLT September 30 in order to be considered for this class. We will be making selections for this class the week of October 4. NDC also asks that units/divisions & ships that have signed up for multiple spots include with the TR&AF a justification why you need more than one slot. Please make sure to review the pre-requisites for the DMT class. Priority will be given to individuals that have signed up for MPIC and DMT together since MPIC fulfills the pre-requisites for DMT. These classes will be offered again in November 2006. Please contact Laurie Barber @ (206) 526-6695 or via e-mail, Laurie.Barber@noaa.gov, with any questions about the



CCR LINK ON NDC SITE

If you are interested in utilizing closed circuit rebreathers in your field work, please take a look at the following link on the NDC website. Comments are welcome.

PROPOSED MINIMUM MANUFACTURING AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR CLOSED CIRCUIT MIXED GAS REBREATHERS

http://www.ndc.noaa.gov/pdfs/NOAA%20CCR%20Standards_Final%20Draft.pdf

